

The Signs of the Times, vol. 27

*ESR*

Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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# 1901

## February 20, 1901

**“Calling and Election” The Signs of the Times, 27, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

Much trouble many people make for themselves, and others also, by limiting the love and mercy of God. “I should like to be saved, but it is impossible unless I am one of the elect, and I have never been called.” Sad to say, not a little religious (not Christian) teaching it in time past, and even to the present time, has tended to produce an impressive piece false ideas of God. That professed atheist should blasphemed God’s name and character, is to be expected; but that professed followers of God should ever for a moment sanction, not to say promulgate, so horrible a libel upon Him as that He has chosen a certain view to be saved and that He has deliberately doomed all the rest to return all destruction, regardless of their desire or willingness to be saved, is beyond comprehension. Let us note a few simple Bible facts.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.1*

**Who Are Called?**

First as to who are called. Read the words of the apostle Peter to those who assembled on the day of Pentecost: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” *Acts 2:38, 39.* Who are they whom “the Lord our God shall call”? Note carefully it is those to whom the apostle was speaking, and to their children, and to “all that are afar off.” That includes everybody.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.2*

The same thing was spoken through the prophet Isaiah. By that prophet the Lord said, “I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near.” *Isaiah 57:19.* The Lord proclaims peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near;

there is no chance for anybody to find an exception.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.3*

With this agree the words of Christ, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden God, and I will give you rest." *Matthew 11:28*. This includes every needy soul. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." *Isaiah 55:1*. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." *Revelation 22:17*. Not only is every one who hears invited to come, but he is also authorized to invite everybody else whom he sees. There is no partiality with God.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.4*

In view of these plain calls, who dare limit the grace of God? "The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men." *Titus 2:11*, R.V. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." *Romans 5:18*. All men have gone astray, like lost sheep, and all are called back. God "willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." *1 Timothy 2:4*, R.V. The Lord is "long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." *2 Peter 3:9*.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.5*

#### **Self-elected**

"Yes; but does it not say somewhere that many are called, but you chosen?" and is not that evidence that all can not be saved?-Yes, and no. That statement is indeed made, but it by no means teaches that there are any who cannot be saved if they wished salvation. The question is really equivalent to this, "Does not this last taxed overthrow all the others?" The Word of God is not divided against itself. Read the passages in which this statement is found (*Matthew 20:1-16* and *22:1-14*), and it will be apparent that those who are not chosen are those who themselves do not choose to accept the terms of salvation. That is the whole of the matter. Election means choice. The free choice is given to all. "Choose life, that both foul and thy seed may live." *Deuteronomy 30:19*. "Choose you this day

and who eat will serve.” *Joshua 24:13.SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.6*

Whoever chooses salvation, or, in other words, elects to be saved, is one of the elect. The non-elect are, of course, lost, but it is of their own choice. Of those who are lost, the Spirit of God says, “Forthat they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.” *Proverbs 1:29-31.SITI February 20, 1901, page 116.7*

When the Jews at Antioch “spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming,” the apostle said, “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” *Acts 13:45, 46.* They judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, by refusing to receive it. It was indeed given to them, and they put it away from them. Note that it was all in their own hands; they were made judges in the case. And so it is with all men; each of man determines his own worthiness or unworthiness. Whoever will receive the eternal life, is counted worthy of it. Each man judges of his own fitness, and he elects himself. Surely God could not possibly deal more fairly with mankind.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 117.1*

That the matter of the election is one that rests with the individual, is seen from the exhortation of the apostle Peter: “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling an election sure.” *2 Peter 1:10.* All men are called of God’s own free grace; but the call avails nothing if men do not choose to accept it. Having chosen the gift of God, it rests with the individual to make his selection sure, “by a patient continuance in well-doing” thru keeping the faith.*SITI February 20, 1901, page 117.2*

#### **Man’s Destiny in His Own Hands**

There is a grave responsibility in the fact, yet it is a most glorious truth, that God has placed every man’s destiny in his own hands.

Every soul can have just what he himself chooses. Surely God is good to all, and His goodness is manifest even in the destruction of the wicked, since even in their destruction God is but allowing them to have that for which they manifest did a most determined choice even after the fullness of the blessing of life had been set before them. They simply get the wages for which they have labored; for "the wages of sin is death." *Romans 6:23*. Men who persistently choose their own way, in opposition to that of God, "treasure up" unto themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." *Romans 2:4, 5*. It would be unjust not to give them the wages which they have so carefully laid up. *SITI February 20, 1901, page 117.3*

But is it not a fact that Jesus said, "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him"?-Yes, Jesus did say that; and He also said of Himself, with reference to His crucifixion, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." *John 12:32*. Now when we remember that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," and that it was "by the grace of God" that Jesus tasted "death for every man" (*Hebrews 2:9*), we can see that it is caught Himself who in Christ is growing all men to Himself. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." *Jeremiah 31:3*. E. J. WAGGONER. *SITI February 20, 1901, page 117.4*

**February 27, 1901**

**“What Is This?” The Signs of the Times, 27, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

When the children of Israel first saw the food which God provided for them, they said, “Man-hoo?” that is, “What is this?” And that question, Anglicized into “manna,” has served as a name for it ever since. People generally think that “manna” is the name of that which the children of Israel ate for forty years, whereas, on the contrary, it is only an indication of ignorance as to what it was. That is the way with many of the “scientific” names that we meet with. In this case, however, there was no excuse for ignorance; for God had told them beforehand that He would send them “bread from heaven,” and we are told that the people ate of “the corn of heaven”—“angels’ food.” If they had called it by its real name, “bread from heaven,” or “heavenly bread,” it would have kept them in much closer touch with heaven, and they might have been saved from much evil. Likewise in these days if men would recognize God’s gifts as coming directly from Him, instead of inventing names which serve only faintly to conceal their own ignorance, and effectually to shut off the view of God, the world would be in a far better condition. E. J. WAGGONER. *SITI February 27, 1901, page 132.1*

## March 13, 1901

**“Imitators of God” The Signs of the Times, 27, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children.” *Ephesians 5:1*, R.V. If God Himself had not commanded us to do this, we might think that the requirement was a manifest impossibility, but since it is God Himself who bids us be like Him, to say that it is impossible is to charge God with light and foolish talking. Impossible instructions only bring ridicule upon the person who issues them. *SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.1*

God’s ambition for men is only limited by the length and breadth of His own life, and as this is infinite, so is His mercy toward the children of men. “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.” *Psalms 103:11. SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.2*

God is love, and love can not be content with bestowing less than its all upon the loved one. “God loved His Son, and to Christ was given all the fullness of the Godhead, the very brightness of the Father’s glory. But the same love was extended to us, and so the Saviour says, “The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them; ... that the world may know that Thou... lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me.” *John 17:22, 23. SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.3*

It is as beloved children that we are to be imitators of God. A father counts nothing too good for his children. They inherit his life and physical characteristics, and in addition, all the means and advantages that he is able to bestow. If we are children of God, we are heirs, “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” The servants of a king may by faithful service rise to high rank, but they never earn the throne. That is reserved for one who never did anything to attain to it, for the child who was born to the privilege. So also no one becomes the child of God by virtue of his own efforts or sacrifices. He is born to the position, and then that right to the kingdom and free share in all is Father’s glory, which he never could hope to win



as a servant, are his birthright.*SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.4*

To how many is this wonderful privilege given? The word “therefore” connects with the preceding sentence, so that we read, “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be ye therefore imitators of God.” The children do not become so by reason of their spotless character. They have stood in sore need of a free forgiveness. They are not beloved children because they are so lovable. It is in Christ that God forgives them. “God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” *Romans 5:8, R.V.**SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.5*

Since, then, not a single soul becomes a beloved child by his own deserving, it is evident that the way is as open for any one to have his sins forgiven and become a child and an imitator of God, as it can possibly be for any other one. If a single soul obtains the salvation, it will condemn every other one who does not; for the way is equally open to all, and the fact that one can be saved shows that all may if they will. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.*SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.6*

Remember that the imitating of God is to be done “as dear children.” We are to walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us. The son does not work for what he receives from his father. The greater the wealth and power of the father, the better it is to be born his son. So, as God’s holiness and ways are seen to be infinite, the children will not gaze with despair at the awful distance that separates God from them, but instead will rejoice in the riches of the glory of the inheritance. The ever-deepening sense of God’s glory will not bring a corresponding depression of mind and quenching of hope, but will produce an ever-deepening thankfulness at the remembrance of His holiness. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” *1 John 3:1.**SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.7*

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.” *Colossians 2:6.* He is received as a free, undeserved gift, and all that pertains to life and godliness comes in the same way. Many

think that it is a very simple matter to get their sins forgiven, but a very complicated and difficult matter to live a Christian life, such as God commands. This is because they think they must rely upon themselves in part to complete the good work which Christ has begun in them. It is as easy for God to keep us from falling and preserve us faultless at last, as it is for Him to lift us out of the miry clay in the first place. He does both by imparting Himself, "and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." *Romans 8:10.* E. J. WAGGONER. *SITI March 13, 1901, page 162.8*

## May 8, 1901

“Unity and Uniformity” *The Signs of the Times*, 27, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

Without the slightest approach to unity, there may be the most perfect uniformity. A lot of marbles may be exactly uniform as regards size and shape and color, but there is no unity among them. *SITI May 8, 1901, page 292.1*

So there may be uniformity among people, without unity. Since the days of Constantine strenuous efforts have been put forth by the ecclesiastical politicians to produce uniformity, and these efforts have been thought to be in the interests of Christian unity. In some cases uniformity has been attained, but there has been no more unity than there is in a gross of buttons fastened together by a string. *SITI May 8, 1901, page 292.2*

The Bible is full of the idea of unity in the church of Christ, but we do not read so much about uniformity. This unity is to be the unity of life and growth, and not a mere outward connection. In Christ's prayer to the Father for His disciples, He said, “And the glory that Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one.” *John 17:22, 23*. Here we see that the glory of the Lord is to effect the union of believers, and the union is to be that of the Father and the Son. *SITI May 8, 1901, page 292.3*

The union of the Father and the Son is union of spirit. We can not comprehend this union, but we may know that it is not a forced union, but that it results from their very nature. They have *one life*. Their thoughts and purposes are the same, not because they come together and compare notes and agree to be alike, but because one life is in them both. So the union of believers is to be a vital union, or it is not any union at all. It is not accomplished by strife and debate and decisions of majorities, but by yielding the mind to Christ and hearing His voice. They are to be united by the mind and Spirit of Christ. The life of the Father and the Son in each member of the church will produce the most perfect union in the whole

body.*SITI May 8, 1901, page 292.4*

For the human body is the most perfect example of unity, and it is the example that the Bible gives us. Christ is the Head of the body, the church. *Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18*. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." *1 Corinthians 12:12-14*. In the human body there are many members, and each member has a different office from the rest; there is not uniformity of action among the members, but there is the most perfect unity. All work together in perfect harmony for one object. So it is in the body of Christ. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."*SITI May 8, 1901, page 292.5*

This gives no ground for the idea that there may be divisions in the church of Christ, one division believing one thing, and another division believing and practicing another thing. God has tempered the body together, that there should be no schism in the body." *1 Corinthians 12:24, 25*. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thru all, and in you all." *Ephesians 4:4-6*. The apostle's exhortation is, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." *1 Corinthians 1:10*. But let it be borne in mind that this union is not artificial, but natural; not the human nature, however, but the divine nature.*SITI May 8, 1901, page 292.6*

The unity of belief in the church is not forced by the church coming together and the majority defining the creed to be beloved. The church can not define doctrine, nor make laws for itself or anybody else. The church of Christ is made up of all who obey the Lord's commands not a body to issue commands. The Head directs, the body obeys. God speaks; each one must listen to His voice, for faith comes by hearing the Word of God, and no one can give faith to another. "It is the gift of God." E. J. WAGGONERS*SITI May 8, 1901,*



## May 15, 1901

**“Comfort from Hard Sayings” The Signs of the Times, 27, 20.**

E. J. Waggoner

“I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people.” *SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.1*

This is a universal truth, and worthy of all acceptance. God never speaks a word that is not laden with peace for all who will listen to it. In “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” there is life. Therefore “blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.” *SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.2*

If we would but take this truth to our hearts, and keep it always in mind, it would smooth many a difficult passage. Instead of feeling that we have been rebuffed by some dark saying, we should consider it diligently to see what new phase of comfort it has for us. *SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.3*

When the Lord said to Jacob, “Let Me go, for the day breaketh,” what a loss the patriarch would have sustained if he had said disconsolately, “It is no use; I can’t get any satisfaction,” and had let go. When the Lord said, “Let go,” he held on the more firmly, and received more than he had asked for, or thought of getting. *SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.4*

But how could Jacob have the face or the heart to continue his hold on the Lord after such a peremptory, almost curt, command to let go? Because he was quick enough to perceive in it the promise of all that he desired. Consider the case for a moment. Jacob had wrestled all night with one whom he supposed was an enemy. As the day began to break, his antagonist touched his thigh, and it was immediately out of joint. By that Jacob knew that he had not been wrestling with a man, but with God in human form. He could not for a moment longer suppose that human power could avail anything, even if he had been able to stand so as to exert it any longer. *SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.5*

He could do nothing but cling to the Lord for support. But he knew that the One who with a touch of His finger could dislocate his thigh could sever his arm-clasp if he chose. But He did not choose. God can not deny Himself, and He is all love and compassion; therefore He can not turn away from any one who trusts Him. So Jacob saw in the words of the mighty God, "Let Me go," the assurance that as long as he held on the Lord could not turn away from him. Jacob had the matter all in his own hands, and he improved the opportunity.*SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.6*

When Moses was pleading for Israel after their great sin at Sinai, God said, "Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them." *Exodus 32:10*. But Moses was far from being discouraged by this seemingly stern command. He saw in the words the proof that God could not be angry with the sinful people as long as one pleaded in their behalf, even tho they themselves were not seeking His favor; so the petition was pressed with boldness, and the people were spared.*SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.7*

Think of Abraham pleading with God for Sodom. Not a request but was granted. At first Abraham asked only that the city might be saved if fifty righteous persons were found in it. To this the Lord readily agreed. Then, waxing bolder, Abraham reduced the number to forty-five, then to forty, to thirty, to twenty, and at last to ten, and at each successive step the Lord agreed to save the city if so many righteous persons were found in it. Then having come down to ten, Abraham left off interceding. He doubtless had in view the size of Lot's family, his married daughters and their husbands, and supposed that his last request would suffice to save the city. From all that is given, there is no reason to suppose that God would have refused if Abraham had asked that the city be saved if five righteous persons were found in it, or if he had asked for the sake of Lot alone. But the point is that the mercy of God endures forever, and that He never has the heart to refuse any petition that is made in the boldness of faith.*SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.8*

If when God says, "Let Me alone," there is such strong consolation, and such assurance that we shall receive all our heart's desire, what confidence may we not have when He calls us to come to

Him, and tells us to put Him in remembrance, and “give Him no rest”! Then “wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord.” E. J. WAGGONER. *SITI May 15, 1901, page 306.9*



## June 13, 1901

**“I Am” The Signs of the Times, 27, 24.**

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus was walking on the stormy sea, coming to the aid of His disciples, whom He had seen “toiling I rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them;” “but they, when they saw Him walking on the sea, supposed that it was an apparition, and cried out; for they all saw Him, and were troubled. But He straightway spake with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.” *Mark 6:48-50, R.V. SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.1*

These were comforting words to the disciples, and they have comforted many disciples since that night on the sea; but the disciples at that time did not derive all the comfort from them they ought, “for their heart was hardened;” and very few of the disciples since that day have seen in the words as they read them all that the Saviour really said. *SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.2*

The words rendered, “It is I,” meant far more than a simple assurance that it was their Teacher, a real person, who was coming to them, and not an apparition. They included that, which was certainly reassuring; but if the hearts of the twelve had not been hardened, they would have found not merely relief from their childish fears, but eternal comfort; for the words that Jesus uttered, literally translated, were, “Be of good cheer; *I am.*” *SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.3*

Here we see that Jesus identified Himself with the “I AM” who sent Moses to deliver the children of Israel from Egypt. *Exodus 3:14*. “I AM THAT I AM.” That expresses infinity of existence, -the One, “who is, and was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” Of God alone can it be said that “He is.” That means that He is the Source of all existence; for everything that exists, exists solely in Him. “I Am” is the power that creates and upholds. In Jesus is the name of God, “for in Him were all things created.” *SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.4*

The words that Jesus spoke that night on the sea, were used by

Him several times, but only once do they appear in our translation, namely, in *John 8:58*, "Before Abraham was, I am." But twice more in the same chapter He declares Himself to be the "I Am," and points us to the cross as proof of the fact. Thus: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that *I am*." *Verse 18*. From *John 12:32, 33* we know that the lifting up of Christ is His crucifixion. There is no salvation except by the cross of Christ; and the cross, as we have just seen, is the proof that he is the "I Am," the Creator; therefore He said, "If ye believe not that *I am*, ye shall die in your sins." *John 8:24. SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.5*

"I AM" signifies eternal power,-self-existent, independent power. It is the name of Him who is "from everlasting to everlasting, and who is the dwelling-place of all mankind,-the One in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." "In His hand are the deep places of the earth; and the strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land." *Psalms 124:5*. So when Jesus said to His disciples, "Be of good cheer, I am," He really assured them that in Him was the power that made the sea, and that could therefore rule its raging, and that could save them, not only from momentary danger, but from eternal death. *SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.6*

In that name, "I Am," there is everlasting strength. And it is all our hope. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him." *Hebrews 11:6*, R.V. To us, as well as to the disciples on the sea, He says, "Be of good cheer; I am." He is always present, with all power in heaven and on earth. Simply believe that He is, and continue believing, and you have eternal salvation. "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." How boundless are those words, "I am." *SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.7*

"He that hath ears, let him hear." "To-day, if we will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," as did the twelve and thus lose the infinite comfort and strength that lies in the assurance "I am." When in deep trouble or temptation, fix your mind upon the fact that He is. Listen to His voice saying, "I am," and let your soul be swallowed up in contemplation of it, and you will be lost to everything else.

Trouble will be light as air, and temptation will lose its power. The tempter will flee from you. What can not one endure, who knows not only that Christ is near, but that His presence creates, upholds, and saves! Let Him be to you the "I am," and you will find that in Him you have everything that is. For "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Let this be your confidence, and soon you will see Him as "He is." E. J. WAGGONER *SITI June 13, 1901, page 373.8*

## August 14, 1901

“A Lesson from the Lilies” The Signs of the Times, 27, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

“Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith?” *Luke 12:27, 28. SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.1*

Jesus has sent us to school to the lilies, and has appointed them our teachers in the way of life. We have not by any means exhausted the lessons that they have to give us; indeed, few of us have made more than a beginning, for although the instruction that they give is so simple that a child can understand it, yet no philosopher of the schools can compare with them in depth of wisdom. *SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.2*

What are we to consider about the lilies?—“How they grow.” It is not how they *look*, but how they *grow*. One would naturally suppose that, since Jesus was talking of clothing, and how we are to be provided with what is necessary, He would have directed us to the looks of the lilies, to see how tastefully they are dressed; but such an exposition is evidence of our need of instruction. We are so ignorant of the first principles of the wisdom which the lilies teach. *SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.3*

“The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” It is not that the Lord despises outward beauty; far from it. “Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary,” and He has promised to “beautify the meek with salvation.” He delights in beauty; but He knows that as corruption comes from within, and not from without (*Mark 7:18-23*), so beauty, to be real, must come from within. He severely rebuked the scribes and Pharisees, because they made clean the outside of the cup and the platter, while within they were full of impurity, and said, “Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and

platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” *Matthew 23:25, 26.SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.4*

Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like a lily. How is that? Is a lily, then, so much more wondrously beautiful than other things? Jesus did not say so. Some lilies are most gorgeous, but others are very plain, and scarcely noticeable. It is quite likely that when Solomon was arrayed in his royal apparel on State occasions, his clothing would outshine a whole bed of ordinary lilies. Yet in all his glory he was not clothed like the most modest lily that grows. Why?- Because no matter how gorgeous and beautiful his clothing was, it was all *put on*; it was no part of himself; but the beauty of the lily’s dress is the lily itself. All that it looks to be, it is.*SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.5*

Thus it is that the lilies, who are teachers by divine appointment, teach us that the only clothing that is of any real value is that which can not be put on and off, but that which *grows*; that which is formed from within. Even such clothing did the apostle Peter write about, saying to the women, “Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” *1 Peter 3:3, 4.SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.6*

How strange that people should proudly boast of that which is no part of themselves? Not only is our clothing no part of ourselves, but the very fact that we are obliged to wear manufactured clothing at all, is proof of our fallen and degraded state. God is clothed with light as a garment, for He Himself is light. His clothing is the beauty of His own character. His clothing, like that of the lily, is what He is. Even so it was with man in the beginning, for man was made in the image of God. It was not until they lost their first estate through sin, that our first parents had any need of clothing that must be put on from the outside. So that upon which most people bestow so much care and worry, and in which they take so much pride, is the mark of their shame.*SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.7*

Until the kingdom is again restored as in the beginning, all mankind,

the children of God as well as the wicked, will be obliged to wear manufactured clothing; but let them not worry about it, nor be proud of what is no part of them. What should they do?—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." Then clothing and everything else that is necessary will be added.*SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.8*

This agrees with the exhortation to us on apparel that is "the hidden man of the heart." Where the King is, there is the kingdom; and the King is the Word of God, that "was made flesh." This Word is in us, in our mouth, and in our heart, that we may do it. If we yield ourselves to it, we shall be filled with righteousness. We shall grow up "trees of righteousness," and our clothing will be "the robe of righteousness," the product of the growth from within. He who is able to supply us with this beautiful clothing, of which no one can boast, because it comes only with humility, can very easily provide the other necessary clothing. Temporal things are very easily managed by Him who handles eternities.*SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.9*

The lesson therefore which we learn from the lilies is that absolute dependence and trust. "Consider the lilies how they grow." How do they grow?-They simply grow. They grow by the power of God in them, which they do not try to resist. You will remember that the name "Israel" was given to Jacob when he cease all his struggling against the Lord, and cast himself wholly upon the Almighty. His strength was demonstrated to be nothing, and he let the Lord support him. Now the Lord says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his rose as Lebanon." *Hosea 14:5*. That is, "they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." Their beauty will be "the beauty of holiness." Their clothing will be not simply that which can be put on and off, but, like that of the lily, it will be the product of the growth of grace within; it will be themselves, and will endure to all eternity. E. J. WAGGONER.*SITI August 14, 1901, page 515.10*

## October 2, 1901

**“That Convenient Season” The Signs of the Times, 27, 39.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Paul was before Felix, reasoning of “righteousness, temperance and judgment to come,” strong conviction seized the Roman governor, so that he trembled; but he was not willing to yield to it, so he said to the apostle, “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” *Acts 24:25.SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.1*

From what we know of the character Felix, it is quite likely that he had no intention of every accepting Christ, and that his talk about “a convenient season” was only an excuse to Paul, and a means of throwing off conviction. But it is a fact that there are very many who say the same thing, who really think that at some time or other they will serve the Lord, and who by the plea of a convenient season delude themselves into believing that they are at present doing as well as can be expected of them.*SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.2*

One man says, “If I could get away from these associates, I would reform.” The youth thinks, “When I get a little older, temptations will not be so strong, and then I can serve the Lord;” while the old man thinks, “If I were younger, it would be easy to be a Christian, but now I am too old to change.” Another says, “If my circumstances were different, I would keep the Sabbath.” “As soon as I get out of debt,” or, “As soon as I can get out of this business, I will begin keeping all the commandments.” And thus people deceive themselves, and continue in sin.*SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.3*

They deceive themselves often into thinking that they are as good as they need be. For if it were true that they absolutely *can not* at present serve the Lord, then of course it can not be required of them. But the very statement of the case shows its fallacy: for there is no time when one ought not to serve the Lord. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” *Luke 10:27*. This leaves no moment of one’s existence when he is free not to serve the Lord;

for if one does not serve God all the time, he is not serving Him with all his strength. It certainly is not serving God with all our strength, when we devote the most and best of it to self and the devil before we begin to obey the Lord.*SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.4*

#### **What Sin Is**

Sin is sin no matter or why it is committed. "Sin if the transgression of the law." *1 John 3:4*. To do anything contrary to God's will, therefore, is sin. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." *James 4:17*. Now when a person says that he intends to serve the Lord, or to begin to do it; and therefore by not doing it he convicts himself of sin. And yet by pleading inconvenience and unfavorable circumstances, he makes himself believe that his sin is not really sin. He assumes great virtue to himself by thinking of what he would do if he were in the proper circumstances. Because he thinks he would if he could be takes to himself the credit of the deed, and thus often goes along contentedly, and never finds the "convenient season" for which he is looking. So well satisfied does he become that he is doing the best he can, that no time ever seems to him convenient for changing his course.*SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.5*

Suppose now that the "convenient season" has come, or that the change in circumstances or associates has been effected, and that the person has changed his manner of life as he proposed to do; is he really any better than he was before? What think you?-Certainly not; it is not he that has changed; it is only the circumstances. The conditions have changed, he remains the same as before. Since he began to serve the Lord (as he thinks) only when the conditions became favorable, it is evident that when the conditions become unfavorable again, he will leave off.*SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.6*

Does the man really accept Christ, when he professes to serve Him only at a more convenient season?-Not by any means. He really dishonors Christ, bearing false witness against Him. Christ is a perfect Saviour. "He is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him." All power in heaven and in earth is in His hands. He is the Head of all principality and power. He has power



over all flesh. *John 17:2*. He has spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, exhibiting them in triumph by His cross. *Colossians 2:15*. Even the bars and gates of death He has burst asunder, and “all the power of the enemy” was nothing, to Him. Now what does the man say who pleads that his circumstances or temptations are such that he can not now serve the Lord?-Why he virtually charges Christ with lack of power to save him in his present condition. He limits the power of God. He does not accept Christ as a full and perfect Saviour, able to save one from the lowest depths, and to pluck a brand from the fire, or a soul from the jaws of the lion. But he who does not take Christ as a perfect and all-powerful Saviour, does not really accept Him at all; for Christ is nothing but perfection. *SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.7*

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” *2 Corinthians 6:2*. Jesus is “mighty to save.” He says, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” *Isaiah 45:22*. “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” *John 6:37*. “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” *Matthew 11:28*. “I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye Me in vain; I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.” *Isaiah 45:19*. The Lord does not deceive anybody. He does not call all to Him to find present salvation, and then say to some, “I didn’t mean you; your case is too difficult; I shall have to wait till a more convenient season.” No He can save all, and He can save now. *SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.8*

Then turn to Him now. Why not have rest? See; you do not have rest now; for you admit that the conditions are too hard for you. Well, suppose your more convenient season came, what then?-Why those supposedly more favorable circumstances would be all that you could endure, if not more, so that even if you kept on with your confession, you would never know enjoyment and peace in the service of God. It would be a hard service to you, which shows that it would not be real service; for His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. But if you accept Him now, when everything seems to be the hardest and most unfavorable, you will find immediate rest. Then when the more favorable circumstances come, if there be any such, you can have so much the more ease in His service. So in Christ you will always find green pastures and still waters, a table will be

spread for you in the presence of your enemies, and you can eat without fear. Being delivered out of the hand of your enemies, and from the hand of all that hate you, you can serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of your life. *Luke 1:74, 75. SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.9*

What is the assurance for this?-The One who is made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," is "the power of God." *1 Corinthians 1:24, 30*. He in whose life we have redemption, is the One in whom all things were created, and in whom all things hold together. *Colossians 1:14-17*. "Ah Lord God! behold, Thou has made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee." *Psalms 37:17*. Then commit the keeping of your soul to Him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator, and *do it now*. E. J. WAGGONER. *SITI October 2, 1901, page 630.10*

